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ETTERA. Mr. Mitchell-Jones, the Acting Police Magistrate, was lately in the act of reporting to the Police Council, or the Chief Clerk at the Police Station, of the delivery of his message in the manner in which it was given. Perhaps the accusation was prompted by a mistake which appeared in an article in the *Daily Press* of Saturday morning last, by which Mr. Mitchell-Jones was made to appear as having detained a man in custody for eleven days, whereas the person referred to was out on bail. However this may be, it is to be regretted that the new occupant of the Police Bench should have made an accusation which he was unable to substantiate, and still more to be regretted that he should have accompanied it by a kind of threat. It has been remarked by an old and experienced official that he never read an adverse criticism upon his public conduct without learning something by it. Let us hope that the same good fortune will attend the younger and rising generation of officials of this Colony; and that the first lesson to be learnt is this; that while it is the business of the public press to criticize the acts of public officers without acrimony or coarseness, it is equally the duty of a public officer to recognize the press as the servants of the public, and to treat its representatives with respect.

The result of the prosecution of Tsang Tai Lin on a charge of abduction at the Criminal Sessions on Monday last cannot be said to be altogether the Crown Prosecution. There was the clearest evidence possible that an abduction had taken place—the prisoner admitted it—and there was almost as clear evidence that the prisoner had a part in it, and yet, through a flaw in the indictment, the accused is allowed to escape the consequences of a crime which it is the duty of the Government to do its utmost to suppress. The evidence was of the most reliable or satisfactory character, but we think that, if they had not been expressly forbidden by his Lordship the Chief Justice, in his summing up, to do so, would have returned a verdict that prisoner had been guilty of at least abduction. We do not know under what ordinance the prisoner was charged, but it would seem from the form of the indictment that it was necessary to allege some motive for the abduction. If this be so, why was not a second count added alleging the motive to have been a desire to obtain a ransom, or 'damages,' as his Lordship suggested? His Lordship seemed to push the idea of any body of men demanding a ransom payable in Hongkong, and asked 'who would pay it.' We venture to think that there are thousands of Chinese in this Colony from whom ransoms could be extorted. This kidnapping of these parts cannot be credited with the boldness of the daring brigands of Eastern Europe, but they might easily play their cards well enough to enable them to extract money from the more timid and gullible members of the Chinese community. However that may be, it is sincerely to be regretted that for the want of a more specific indictment a man who practically admitted his guilt should have been allowed to go unpunished. We say this evidence was sufficient on which to convict him; if it was not, we understand, might have been obtained. The effect of this prosecution may be harmful in the extreme.

With regard to the other case which broke down, in which the prisoner was charged with highway robbery, there can be little doubt but that the complainant, who gave distinctly contrary evidence in the Supreme Court to that which he gave before the Police Magistrate, had been 'squared' by the prisoner's friends. His testimony in one Court or the other must have been false, and it seems a great pity that he should have been allowed to go away without any punishment.

The endless hair-splitting and differences of the judges in relation to the Queen v. Ashwell are something near akin to a disgrace to the English bench. In January last, Ashwell attempted to borrow from a friend a shilling and was given in mistake a sovereign, which he kept. Upon the very simple question whether this was larceny or not, five judges sat in Council. Finally the question was referred before four judges, seven of whom were in favour of a conviction, while the other seven were for the opposite opinion. Altogether, it would be difficult to conceive a more miserable waste of time.—*Truth*.

Boats for petroleum in the Bolan may now be considered as past the experimental stage. The Canadian experts engaged are now confident that sufficient oil can be raised, not only to supply fuel for the railway, but also for the lighting of all Northern India. Some of the engines of the Peshawar Railway are being altered so as to burn petroleum instead of wood; and the new fuel will, no doubt, in time be universal on that and the present Indus Valley line.—*Pioneer*.

Duncan's candidature, which proved successful at Newmarket-on-Tyne, Mr. John Morley, former editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, was asked whether he concurred with the sentence passed upon Mr. Stead, the present editor. He replied that for three years Mr. Stead had been a loyal and devoted lieutenant, and few things could afflict him more than the thought that that good fellow was at that moment in prison. He, however, felt that Mr. Stead had committed great and grievous errors of judgment, but whatever he could do reasonably and justly to procure a remission of his sentence he would do with all his heart.

Tax great question of the sinfulness of raffles at bazaars is not to be permitted to rest—at all events in Scotland. The Free Church Presbytery of Inverness has decided by a large majority that raffles are not only contrary to the law of the land but to the law of God, and cannot be regarded as harmless or allowable for any object whatsoever; moreover, that the practice is dishonouring to God, who is irreverently appealed to as dispenser of lots, contrary to every principle of sound morality.

A private letter from the Afghan Boundary Commission thus describes the first convivialities exchanged between the distinguished representatives of the two nations on the disputed border, which were evidently worthy of the occasion:—'We had a grand dinner,' says the writer, 'at the Russian camp last night (14th November). It was a real treat, decorated out of all recognition. Bayonets formed excellent candlesticks and the whole thing went off capitally; but we all feel the effect of a little this morning, as we commenced with port, went through madeira, claret, and Caucasian wine, and finished up with champagne and jam! A Cossack guard outside sang beautifully the whole evening to the accompaniment of a small drum. They were all in full dress, some of the junior officers were of wild appearance, as though freshly come from the Caucasian jungles. Only half a dozen out of the sixteen could speak anything but Russian.'—*Pioneer*.

At a shipyard in New York (U.S.) there is a vessel under construction, and nearly finished, which is very attractive to the curious. The boat is 75 tons burthen, 100 feet long, and twelve feet beam, and is provided with four long breech-loading cannons, which project from ports 8 feet from the ends and a few feet above the keel. It is proposed to propel this craft by firing blank cartridges from the stern ports; charges from the forward ports will back her, and charges fired at one side change the direction. The inventors make enthusiastic claims over the expected speed and low cost, but the cost of fuel (gunpowder) is claimed to be trivial, the claim being made that they will be able to navigate from New York to Newport, some 180 miles, at a cost of 80¢ for powder. The vessel may go, but it is impossible to say.—*Engineering*.

A Madras officer writes from Sukkum:—'We are in a state of siege. We dare not go out to shoot. We have the water way, but that is all. The Frisizes keep us within our lines, and no mistake about it. They are always prowling about. You dare not go out of your lines half a mile. The other day they walked off with forty of our best camels, from under our very noses, and yesterday they surprised and killed one of our mounted infantry patrol, a party of six Europeans who were going to the rounds. What do you think and say to that? They will surprise and kill all of us one of these days! They mean to worry and annoy us, and will do so most effectively. You must send another expedition, and recall me! I am sick of it; it is the most God-forsaken country on the surface of the earth, the worst of all places. I cannot say I am well. I have not been well since I came here. It is not a well-being place.'

The *Nichi-Nichi Shinbun* contains the following note:—The New Oriental Bank Corporation now issues one dollar notes on which the words 'payable at call' appear on the face. The bank seems to have taken the opportunity afforded when the Nippon Ginko is exchanging paper for specie, and when the public have begun to appreciate the convenience of having notes which circulate as good as silver. This is not the first time that a foreign bank has issued notes in our country. The Hongkong and Shanghai Bank has circulated their paper extensively from the Yokohama branch for many years. We do not say, therefore, that the departure of the New Oriental Bank Corporation is a new one, but we must say we do not like to see a foreign bank issuing notes to a large extent without first giving notice to our government, and especially when our financial affairs are being put in order. When the pending revision of the treaties takes place we trust matters of this description will be subjected to the necessary restrictions.

The Anti-Chinese agitation in the United States of America still goes on, and it is gratifying to read that it is being carried on in a legitimate and reasonable manner. An American telegram runs:—Sacramento, December 18th.—The largest public gathering that has assembled in this city for years was that of the adjourned anti-Chinese meeting in Armory Hall last night. Fully 1,500 citizens were present and met in strong anti-Chinese resolutions, and formed a permanent organization, with a membership of over 1,000. All classes of business men are invited to join, and the watchword all along the line is, 'The Chinese must go.' No unlawful means are to be resorted to, but the Chinese will not be employed in any capacity, nor goods and wares of their make bought or used. Already hundreds of them have been discharged, and those who still employ them express the determination to replace them with white men within a few days. The people are united and manly in business, and the Capital City is setting an example which it is hoped will be followed by every city, town and hamlet on the Pacific Coast. The Chinese are getting ready to migrate to pastures new.

MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The members of the Legislative Council met this afternoon. There were present:—H.E. the Officer Administering the Government (W. H. Marsh), President; His Honour Sir George Phillips, Chief Justice; Hon. F. Stewart, Acting Colonial Secretary; Hon. E. L. O'Malley, Attorney General; Hon. A. Lister, Colonial Treasurer; Hon. J. M. Price, Surveyor General; Hon. P. Byrne, Hon. W. Keewick; Hon. A. Jackson; Hon. J. D. Basson; Hon. Wong Shing.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Acting Colonial Secretary laid on the table several minutes by H.E. the Officer Administering the Government.

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote the

sum of \$23,000 for the erection of a wall and embankment at Tsim Sha-tei, to prevent the further taking away by the sea of the valuable marine building sites in that locality.

The Government is pledged to undertake this work, and as it is estimated that the reclaimed area which will be rendered available for sale when the work is completed, will realize a sum of at least \$35,000 the Council will not doubt see no difficulty in voting the extra expenditure.

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote the following sum:—For rent of a house in Wyndham Street, to be used as a prison for females, at \$40 per month—\$480.

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote the small sum of \$10,100 for an annual subscription to the Strangers Home for Asiatics, Africans and South Sea Islanders, at \$10,100 at 3/4—\$863. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has called attention to this Home which is situated in West India Dock Road, Limehouse; and is presented to have done considerable service to the Colonies in taking charge of natives in distress. The amount contributed annually by each of our Colonies is the same as that now asked for.

The Attorney General moved that the Council should consider the bill introduced with the Vagrancy Law, and be postponed for a week, in order that several verbal amendments might be made in it.

The Attorney General moved that the Council go into Committee on the bill entitled 'an ordinance to regulate the printing of newspapers and books and the keeping of Printing Presses within the Colony.'

The Acting Colonial Secretary seconded. The Hon. P. Byrne:—I am doubtful whether I am in order or not, but one or two owners of printing presses in this Colony have asked me to request that the consideration of the bill in Committee be postponed to enable them to appear in person or by counsel or send in a letter or petition with the view of amending some of the clauses to which they object. I don't know but that they ought to have applied sooner but it would be a matter of courtesy if they were allowed to be heard before the passing of the bill.

The Attorney General said he would gladly point out that they would be going a long way in the way of courtesy to the gentleman who was represented by his hon. friend, in postponing the business of the Council. He ought to have devoted his attention to the subject sooner and put his views in writing or otherwise. The Council had been adjourned for a week, and ample opportunity has been given for discussion. Of course the matter is one for the Council; he had no objection personally.

Hon. P. Byrne:—The matter is not pressed.

The Attorney General:—No.

His Excellency:—Is the Attorney General prepared to go on with the other bills?

The Attorney General:—Yes. I have no objection, but it seems to me that we ought to have some regard for the dignity of the Council. We are presumed to be dealing with the public interests. We should be quite ready to listen to any petition from any of these interested but this was far from that, as his hon. friend would admit.

Hon. P. Byrne:—Private interests are likely to be affected.

The Chief Justice:—No bill can be passed without affecting somebody.

The Attorney General:—This is not a private bill. In cases of private bills parties have a right to be represented—here by counsel, but this is a public bill for public objects, but must affect some private interests. The public interest is made up of the aggregate private interests.

His Excellency:—I think it is not a matter of great importance to go on with this bill. There is a great deal more business on the Order of the Day than this Council can possibly get through to-day. I think it would be better to adjourn the Council to next meeting and go on with the next bill.

The Attorney then asked leave to postpone his motion.

The Attorney General afterwards said he was rejoiced by his friend the Chief Justice's remarks, and he thought it might be more convenient to adjourn the Council to next meeting and go on with the next bill.

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on 'Account of Pay or Allowance to Persons deceased.' A Bill 'entitled an Ordinance for the better appointment of Rovers and other Periodical Payments; A Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Law relating to Larceny and Embezzlement; A Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Law relating to the Custody of Infants; A Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Law relating to Sales of Rovers.

The Attorney General gave notice that he would move the third reading of these bills at next meeting.

The Council was then adjourned until this day week, at four o'clock.

OCASIONAL TURF NOTES.

No; my note to-day, I am sorry to say. I must beg you to excuse me, and if you had tried to make a move this morning yourself, Mr. Editor, at 5.30 a.m., you would sympathize with me. Then it was black as Erebus, 6 o'clock showed no improvement, and when grey dawn did at length appear it looked so remarkably like as if we were in for a wet morning as to damp one's courage. However, you won't be so treated again.

I hear that Messrs Hutchings and Dunman put in an appearance, and trotted round with some of their 'stables.'

Work was chiefly confined to the Griffins, and an interesting foot took place between two 'Stubs' of which I may learn more at the time I next write. I believe it was not at all unsatisfactory to either Major The Clerk, or Major The Secretary.

This rain should keep the Course soft, and pleasant for ponies with tender feet.

SCOUT.

STATISTICS OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

One of the problems which have presented themselves for solution in this free port of Hongkong for many years past is the collection of reliable statistics of its export and import trade. In the absence of a Customs-House, many attempts have been made by the Chamber of Commerce to arrive at a satisfactory solution of this difficult question; but as yet only with limited success, as nothing more than an approximation to accuracy has been attained. The freedom of the port is vaguely supposed to be seriously infringed when any effort is made to obtain complete statistics of the trade outwards and inwards; and all sorts of individual mercantile ventures are looked upon as unwarrantably interfered with when particulars as to stocks are asked for. Why this should be so is a thing for those interested to explain; but we fail to see that the legitimate course of trade can be impeded by the general totals being tabulated without the specific names of importers and exporters being given. Even now details of the bulk of the export cargoes are published, or sent round, for the information of the leading mercantile houses, and endeavours continue to be made by the Chamber of Commerce to keep the tip of the stocks of various staples of the market. Only a few commercial houses have from time immemorial declined to help in this matter; hence the difficulty, and the indifference of those which have attended all efforts of this kind. In Singapore, a similar difficulty appears to have arisen of late years. In the days of the East India Company, and even later under the Government of India, certain rules bearing upon this matter appear to have been applied; and commanders of vessels were called upon to furnish particulars of imports and exports. Of late years, however, these rules have fallen into abeyance, and although repeated attempts have been made by the Government of the Straits to revive them, these have been followed by about the same amount of success as has attended similar, if less official, efforts made here in Hongkong. Now the Government seem to have taken up the matter at Singapore, and the result is, that a bill, entitled the 'Registration of Imports and Exports Bill,' has been introduced into the Council, and read a first time, under which the Government will be empowered to frame rules and work them so as to compel unwilling traders to furnish proper returns of goods exported and imported through the port. Power is given to punish those persons who may furnish false returns; and the Governor may make, vary or revoke such rules. From the statement given below, by the Colonial Secretary of the Straits, at a meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 22nd Dec. last, it will be seen that the authorities there desire to carry with them the sympathy of the mercantile community in dealing with this question. An attempt was made in May of 1884 to deal with this subject, upon the advice of one of the unofficial members of Council; but upon the new rule being reported against by the Harbour Master, the bill embodying them was abandoned. The revival of this attempt to gain a long-desired object is interesting to residents of this Colony; and we append the official report of the statement made by the Colonial Secretary when introducing the measure to the Council. The second reading of the Ordinance was fixed for the 12th inst. The report reads as follows:—

REMARKS OF THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

The Colonial Secretary:—Sir, I have the honour to inform you that the Bill for the Registration of Imports and Exports, which I introduced into the Council on the 22nd Dec. last, has been read a first time, and will be read a second time on the 12th inst. The Bill is intended to carry into effect the recommendations of the Committee of the Council, which was appointed in May of 1884 to deal with this subject, upon the advice of one of the unofficial members of Council; but upon the new rule being reported against by the Harbour Master, the bill embodying them was abandoned. The revival of this attempt to gain a long-desired object is interesting to residents of this Colony; and we append the official report of the statement made by the Colonial Secretary when introducing the measure to the Council. The second reading of the Ordinance was fixed for the 12th inst. The report reads as follows:—

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Imports, and the leading members of the mercantile community, in which it was shown that the regulations were quite out of date, and had, for some time before that, more or less been allowed to fall into abeyance. The correspondence has continued from 1867 to the present time, without any very substantial result. These regulations provided that the information should generally be got from the commanders, and not from the consignees and shippers, and it was furnished very irregularly. But in 1881 an attempt was made to put in force the old regulations. That attempt failed, and in 1883 the question was taken up, with the assistance of a late member of this Council, Mr. Graham, who has resigned his seat since the last meeting, and of whom I may therefore say, on behalf of the Government—and I feel that I may say it on behalf of all the members of this Council—that we all greatly regret the loss of his shrewd and kindly counsel and advice in this Council. Some new rules, with that advice, were framed and published with the old Indian Regulation still in force, and it was intended to pass a new Ordinance. However, the men who were working those new regulations, and who had introduced them, were changed, and in May, 1884, the Master Attendant reported against them against the new rules, and, after consultation with the Registering Officers of Peking and Singapore, the Government decided on cancelling them. That threw the mercantile community again up on the old regulations of 1833, and it was found necessary, if it was desired that the commerce of the colony should resolve the outstanding difficulties of the trade, that there should be a law which should enable fairly accurate statistics to be compiled, and enable the law to punish those who mislead their neighbours by false or incomplete returns. The Government has carefully considered the matter, and as the result, has framed a law which appears to meet with general acceptance; but, to carry them with effect it is necessary to pass an Ordinance which shall enable the Government to frame rules and work them under proper authority, and compel people who import and export goods to furnish proper returns, and to make the object of effecting this that I bring this Bill forward.

I have already explained the terms of the Preamble. The second clause states that, on the publication of the new rules, as explained to you, the Indian Regulations shall be repealed, and the authority of this Ordinance shall come into force; authority is given to the Governor in Council to make, vary, and revoke any rules; and it is provided that every regulation made under this Ordinance shall be laid before the Legislative Council at its first meeting, and that the Governor in Council shall have power to amend any regulation made under this Ordinance, and every person guilty of a breach of or non-compliance with any such regulation shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred dollars. The existing law provides for the punishment of any person who makes a false return under this Ordinance; that will come under the Penal Code. There may be some questions arising as to the rules. These rules will not come before the Council in its legislative capacity, but the Government will take measures for consulting the mercantile community, and especially those who have seats on this Council, before passing them. I beg to move the first reading.

The motion having been seconded by Mr. Shefferson, the Bill was read a first time.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ARE OFFICIALS 'HUMANES' OR OTHERWISE?

(To the Editor of the 'CHINA MAIL'.)

Hongkong, Jan. 20, 1886.

Sir,—You will admit that what is known as official etiquette has taken a long time to develop, and that it is especially in the Straits Settlements that it has taken root. The Chinese have sought to hedge round their mandarins with a system of starch and frills which turns out officials who are scarcely men. But the trenchant criticisms contained in the 'funny' letter of your morning's edition, and the lead one to support that the superlatively foolish Chinese system ought to be introduced into Hongkong

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Freight will be received on board until 4 p.m. the day previous to sailing. Parcel Packages will be received at the office until 5 p.m. same day; all Parcel Packages should be marked to address in full; value of same is required.

Consular Invoices to accompany Cargo destined to ports beyond San Francisco should be sent to the Company's Offices in Island Envelopes, addressed to the Collector of Customs at San Francisco.

For further information as to Passage and Freight, apply to the Agency of the Company, No. 50A, Queen's Road Central.

C. D. HARMAN, Agent.
 Hongkong, January 7, 1886. 56

NOTICE.
COMPAGNIE DES MESSAGERIES MARITIMES.
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STEAM FOR SAIGON, SINGAPORE, BATAVIA, COLOMBO, ADEN, SUEZ, PORT SAID, MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA PORTS.

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ON TUESDAY, the 20th January, 1886, at Noon, the Company's S.S. **YANGTSE**, Commandant LOMIER, with MAILES, PASSENGERS, SPECIE, AND CARGO, will leave this Port for the above places.

Cargo and Species will be registered for London as well as for Marseilles, and accepted in transit through Marseilles for the principal places of Europe.

Shipping Orders will be granted until Noon.

Cargo will be received on board until 4 p.m. on Saturday, the 19th Inst. (Parcels are not to be sent on board; they must be left at the Agency's Office.)

Amounts and value of Packages are required.

For further particulars, apply at the Company's Office.
G. DE CHAMPEAUX, Agent.
 Hongkong, January 13, 1886. 94

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For further information as to Freight or Passage, apply to the Agency of the Company, No. 50A, Queen's Road Central.

C. D. HARMAN, Agent.
 Hongkong, January 15, 1886. 109

WINTER TIME TABLE.
THE KOWLOON FERRY.

STEAM LAUNCH **MORNING STAR** Runs DAILY on a FERRY BOAT between Peddar's Wharf and Tsai-Tai-Tui at the following hours:—This Time Table will take effect from the 20th October, 1885.

WEEK DAILY.
 Leave P. Wharf. Leave H.K. Leave P. Wharf. Leave H.K.
 6.15 A.M. 7.15 A.M. 5.15 A.M. 7.15 A.M.
 8.00 " 8.30 " 7.30 " 8.00 "
 8.50 " 9.20 " 8.20 " 8.50 "
 9.40 " 10.10 " 9.10 " 9.40 "
 10.30 " 11.00 " 10.00 " 10.30 "
 11.20 " 11.50 " 10.50 " 11.20 "
 12.10 " 12.40 " 11.40 " 12.10 "
 1.00 " 1.30 " 12.30 " 1.00 "
 1.50 " 2.20 " 1.20 " 1.50 "
 2.40 " 3.10 " 2.10 " 2.40 "
 3.30 " 4.00 " 3.00 " 3.30 "
 4.20 " 4.50 " 3.50 " 4.20 "
 5.10 " 5.40 " 4.40 " 5.10 "
 6.00 " 6.30 " 5.30 " 6.00 "
 6.50 " 7.20 " 6.20 " 6.50 "
 7.40 " 8.10 " 7.10 " 7.40 "

* There will be no Launch on Monday and Friday, on account of coaling.

The above Time Table will be strictly adhered to, except under unavoidable circumstances. In case of stress of weather, due notice will be given of any stoppage.

THE CHINA REVIEW.

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THIS Review, which was intended to meet the wants of students of Chinese history and literature, has reached its Thirtieth Volume. The Review discusses those topics which are of importance in the hands of students of the "Far East" and about which every intelligent person conversant with China or Japan is desirous of acquiring trustworthy information. It includes many interesting Notes and original Papers on the Arts, Sciences, Ethnology, Folklore, Geography, History, Literature, Mythology, Natural History, Antiquities, and Social Customs and Customs, etc., etc., of China, Japan, Mongolia, Tibet, and the Far East generally. Recently a new department has been taken, and the Review now gives papers on Trade, Commerce, and Descriptive notes of Travel by well-known writers. It was thought that in this direction, the Magazine would be more generally useful.

The Review department receives special attention, and endeavours are made to present a careful and complete record of Literature on China, etc., and to give regular contributions on such topics. Authors and Publishers are requested to forward works to "Editor, China Review, care of China Mail Office."

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